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Written By Ex-Agent Agee, 5 Others

CIA Critics Use Magazine To Unmask Agency's Spies

By JAMES P. HERZOG
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Some place in the nation's capital is the office of the Covert Action Information Bulletin.

For fear of harassment, the exact location is kept secret even from friends.

The magazine, three issues old and edited by virulent domestic critics of the Central Intelligence Agency, is attempting to systematically unmask CIA agents stationed around the world.

For those who send a \$10-a-year subscription to a post office box, the Covert Action Information Bulletin offers six issues replete with chatty notes about the comings and goings of CIA station chiefs around the world.

The publication of a magazine whose subscribers include foreign embassies and whose goal is to damage undercover activities by the CIA, angers agency officials. Dale Peterson, a CIA spokesman, described publishing the names as "disrupting" and said the list "poses some danger" to persons on it, whether or not they really are agents.

The Covert Action Information Bulletin, which is edited by six persons including former CIA agent Philip Agee, says it is identifying agents because "we do not believe that one can separate the dirty work of the CIA from the people who perform it. The exposure of past operations is valuable, but is only half the job."

In revealing the name of a new CIA station chief in Jamaica, the bulletin's editors said they don't believe the CIA intends to stop its "nasty covert operations."

The magazine pledged "to expose high-ranking CIA officials whenever and wherever we find them."

The unmasking by Americans of their own intelligence agents became an issue in late 1975 when Richard S. Welch, a CIA station chief in Greece, was assassinated after being named in a magazine

called Counter-Spy. Claims by the CIA that the article led to Welch's death were vehemently denied by CIA critics.

Key figure at the Covert Action Information Bulletin appears to be Louis Wolf, a 38-year-old self-described "spook spotter." During an interview Wolf said, "I truly believe that what Philip (Agee) and the rest of us do is truly patriotic. This is fully within the American position of trying to enforce Democratic positions."

Wolf identifies himself as a graduate of a small Vermont college who went to Southeast Asia with a volunteer program as a conscientious objector in the early 1960s. After three years in Laos, Wolf went to the Philippines, where he spent several years as a graduate student.

He became a journalist and recently collaborated with Agee in writing a book called "Dirty Work" that names 711 persons that the authors say are intelligence agents. Agee, with his initial book, "Inside the Company," was the first of several ex-CIA agents to publicly reveal what they know about the American intelligence network.

"The naming of people makes it much more difficult for them (the CIA) to engage in joint covert operations and to do some intelligence gathering," said Wolf. "We feel this is a service we can perform — a form of protection to people who would have been targeted (by the CIA)."

Wolf is earnest and intense. His wool jacket and coat, his neatly kept appearance give him the look of a somber young college professor. He is imprecise as to why agents should be exposed.

But he indicates it's because the CIA won't stop its attempts to overturn governments and kill those deemed as enemies. Exposing agents will interfere with those operations and will limit the CIA's ability to do harm, he suggests.

The CIA's Peterson, meanwhile, said, "It certainly does not serve any useful purpose to draw up lists of people who

they claim are agency-related officials in the field."

Peterson said that if someone tried to name Soviet agents, "it would be disconcerting to their operations as well." He added, "They're obviously aimed against the United States. I don't know what their relationship," and he stopped in mid-sentence.

"The laws at this point are not very strong in terms of espionage per se," said Peterson. "There are not very many laws on the books that protect individuals from publishing this kind of information."

The CIA's only course against exposes by ex-agents has been to file civil suits, claiming that the authors violated secrecy oaths by publishing books or articles. A government suit against Frank W. Snepp III, a former agent who wrote that the CIA bungled the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, resulted in a U.S. District Court ruling that Snepp couldn't keep the profits from the book.

Not only does the Covert Action Information Bulletin name names — about 23 so far — but it also gives advice on how to unmask a CIA agent.

And the magazine advises readers, that once names are fully checked, they should be published.

"Then," says the magazine in an article by Agee, "organize public demonstrations against those named — both at the American Embassy (overseas) and at their homes ... Peaceful protests will do the job."

The "Naming Names" section of the bulletin has the chatty style of a newsletter. For example, the bulletin describes one man as "a relative newcomer to the agency," who was "noted, at least as of early 1978 at the Beirut embassy as third secretary."

The CIA will neither confirm nor deny the validity of the lists. And spokesman Peterson said that any newspaper that repeats the names is "just lending credence" to a disruptive list.